

Message Text

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DRAFTED BY EUR/EE:WSSHEPARD:FEW

APPROVED BY EUR/EE - MR. ANDREWS

C - MR SHINN

H - MR. GILLIAM

EUR/MR. OTTS

S/S - JMOFFAT

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST IMMEDIATE

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LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, BEXP, HU

SUBJECT: TOUR D'HORIZON WITH SZABO - SECRETARY'S DECEMBER 3

SENATE FINANCE COMMITTEE HEARING

1. LUNCHEON HELD NOVEMBER 29 FOR ANDREWS PRIOR TO HIS DEPARTURE FOR EASTERN EUROPEAN TRIP PROVIDED OCCASION FOR GENERAL TOUR D'HORIZON US - HUNGARIAN RELATIONS. FOLLOWING SUBJECTS WERE ADDRESSED.

2. SZABO GAVE GENERALLY PESSIMISTIC APPRAISAL OF PROSPECTS OF PASSAGE TRADE REFORM ACT DURING THIS SESSION OF CONGRESS. HE ASKED, IN THIS CONNECTION, REGARDING SENATOR JACKSON'S CONTINUING INTEREST IN TRADE REFORM ACT GIVEN APPARENT RESOLUTION USSR EMIGRATION QUESTION. ANDREWS REPLIED THAT DEPARTMENT OF COURSE DID NOT SPEAK FOR CONGRESS, MUCH LESS ANY INDIVIDUAL MEMBER. WE HAD, HOWEVER, RECEIVED SOME IMPRESSIONS THAT CONGRESSIONAL ATTENTION MIGHT NOW TURN TO EMIGRATION PRACTICES OF SPECIFIC EASTERN EUROPEAN COUNTRIES,

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INCLUDING OF COURSE HUNGARY. IN THAT CONNECTION, WE COULD

NOT PREDICT EXACT REQUIREMENTS THAT MIGHT EMERGE ON THIS ISSUE. WE WERE, HOWEVER, AWARE OF CONGRESS' INTEREST IN PARTICULAR CASES, INCLUDING THAT OF MESTERHAZY. WE HAD RECEIVED INFORMATION THAT SECRETARY MIGHT RECEIVE QUESTION ON MESTERHAZY CASE DURING SENATE FINANCE COMMITTEE HEARING ON TUESDAY MORNING, DECEMBER 3.

3. SZABO STATED FAMILIAR VIEW THAT MESTERHAZY GAVE THE HUNGARIANS A PROBLEM OF PRECEDENT, AND CITED HUNGARIAN LAW FORBIDDING EMIGRATION AS GENERAL RULE FOR THOSE UNDER AGE 55. ANDREWS SAID THAT WE WERE AWARE OF THAT LAW, BUT ALSO WERE AWARE OF APPARENT EXCEPTIONS TO IT, EXPLICITLY REFERRING TO CURRENT CASE OF KONRAD, SZELENYI AND MRS. BIRO. IF THE GOH WANTED PEOPLE TO EMIGRATE AS POLICY MATTER, IT SEEMED THAT WAYS COULD BE FOUND FOR THEM TO DO SO. HE REPEATED AGAIN OUR CONCERN LEST THIS CASE AFFECT US - HUNGARIAN RELATIONS, AND AGAIN CITED CONGRESSIONAL INTEREST BOTH IN THIS CASE AND IN DIVIDED FAMILIES REUNIFICATION CASES GENERALLY.

4. SZABO AGREED WITH OUR ASSESSMENT THAT BIRO VISIT WAS USEFUL, HAD MADE POSITIVE CONTRIBUTION TO OUR RELATIONS GENERALLY, BUT HE APPEARED DISAPPOINTED THAT A GREATER BILL OF PARTICULARS ON TRADE-RELATED MATTERS HAD NOT EMERGED. ANDREWS STRESSED FACT THAT TRADE REFORM ACT CURRENTLY BEFORE THE CONGRESS, WITH POSSIBLE AMENDMENTS STILL TO BE CONSIDERED, MADE EXACT CONSIDERATION OF TRADE-RELATED ISSUES (INCLUDING NON-ECONOMIC ONES) NOT A FEASIBLE POSITION DURING BIRO VISIT. WE COULD AT PRESENT ONLY BE CAUTIOUS REGARDING MFN, BEYOND REITERATING WELL-KNOWN VIEW THAT OUTSTANDING COMMITMENTS TO USSR AND ROMANIA WOULD RECEIVE PRIORITY.

5. BRIEF DISCUSSION HUNGARIAN EMBASSY PROPERTY MATTERS FOLLOWED WITH ANDREWS STRESSING IMPORTANCE DIRECT CONTACT BETWEEN HUNGARIAN EMBASSY AND CITIZENS' ASSOCIATION WHICH SZABO AGREED TO CONSIDER. UPON SZABO'S INQUIRY, ANDREWS SAID HE LOOKED FORWARD TO MEETING MFA OFFICIALS DIRECTLY CONCERNED WITH US AFFAIRS, INCLUDING DEPUTY MINISTER NAGY BUT THAT OUR EMBASSY IN BUDAPEST WOULD BE ARRANGING PRO-
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GRAMS.

6. COMMENT: IN VIEW SECRETARY'S DECEMBER 3 FINANCE COMMITTEE HEARING AND PROSPECT OF QUESTION ON MESTERHAZY BY SENATOR CURTIS, WOULD APPRECIATE SOONEST ANY FURTHER INFORMATION THIS SUBJECT.

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